



All Wales People First

Talk Back

The National Voice of People with Learning Disabilities in Wales

Spring 2026



Will you be joining us for our Annual General Meeting? Page 8

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Editorial

Welcome to the Spring 2026 edition of Talk Back. We're busy preparing for #LDAdFest2026. If you've booked your place, we can't wait to see you very soon!

The Annual General (AGM) meeting is happening on day 1 of AdFest. You don't have to book a place to attend the AGM. More information on page 8.

We are still updating your details on our database. You may get a telephone call from one of the AWPf team. We will ask how you want to receive Talk Back. More about this on page 12.

Over the last few months we've been working on some new ways to communicate and share our work with you. We're making plans right now, so keep watching later in 2026!

Remember there are lots of ways you can let us know what matters to you. A diary update with Claire or Kelly; video interview; Talk Back article; speak with your National Council Rep; SATV visit from Gerraint. Get in touch with one of us if you want to get involved.

The AWPf Team

Annual General Meeting
3.10pm 23 June 2026
 Future Inn, Cardiff, CF10 4AU

MORE INFORMATION
www.allwalespeople1st.co.uk

All Wales People First
Talk Back
 The National Voice of People with Learning Disabilities in Wales

Spring 2024

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National Council update



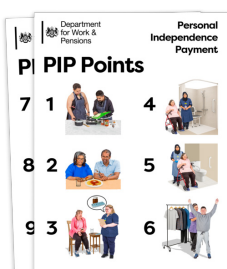
The National Council met in Caernarfon for our annual residential two-day meeting in March. Joe updated us on the activities of All Wales People First in his Chief Executive Report. Reps brought up issues about booking doctor appointments, benefits, the costs of taxis in rural areas, problems with Access to Work and not enough housing in places people want to live.



We've been getting ready for the Senedd Election on 7th May. We launched the Manifesto back in November and Reps have been sharing it with political parties. In March we were joined by Huw from the Senedd Engagement Team to present about the new voting system and changes to the Senedd.



Reps also gave good feedback and ideas for the AWPf TikTok stream. We've been trying to challenge people's ideas about people with learning disabilities using a bit of humour.



In January we talked about the proposed changes to the benefits system. Reps were encouraged to write to their MPs about the

National Council update



changes and are continuing to fight for fair benefits by contributing to the Timms review who are calling for evidence.



Many of us joined Torfaen People First at the Senedd in March to protest about venues not taking cash. Members were joined some by MSs to ask Welsh Government to force businesses to take cards and cash.



I am looking forward to Adfest in June and getting together with all the self-advocates and groups and celebrating their achievements at the MIRROR awards. Get your glad rags on!!!

Lucy Hinksman, National Council Chair



Chief Executive's update



I have been very interested in the 2026 Senedd election, which took place on 7 May 2026. For the first time in over 100 years, Wales is no longer controlled by Labour.

Another big change is that the Senedd has increased from 60 Members of the Senedd (MS) to 96. There are now six MSs for each area instead of one.



This could also mean that more future governments in Wales are made up of more than one political party working together in a coalition.



I hope that Plaid Cymru, who won the most seats in the election, will work with other parties if they need to, to help build a fairer and more equal Wales.



The most important thing for me is stability. For some time, things have felt uncertain.

The new Learning Disability Action Plan has still not been finalised, and the future of the Disability Action Plan for Wales depends on the support of the new Government.

Chief Executive's update



We will continue to work with our partners across Wales to make sure these plans are supported and delivered.

We knew whoever formed the new Government was always going to face some difficult decisions. All Wales People First will continue to speak up for our members and make sure their voices are heard.



I was really encouraged by the number of members who voted and shared photos of themselves outside polling stations on social media.

That is real self-advocacy in action. We fight on together. Victory for self-advocacy!

Joe Powell





Annual General Meeting

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MORE INFORMATION
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Out and about with Gerraint



On 15th December I delivered SATV at Newport People First. We talked about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD), the AWPf Manifesto, and the importance of having choices.



I did SATV with Your Scene in Pontardawe on 20th January. The room was full as it was Kelsey's Birthday!. We talked about choice and we enjoyed some karaoke, dancing and birthday cake.



I ran a few SATV sessions through February and March on the theme of the AWPf Manifesto and Senedd Election:

5 February - People First Bridgend

9 February - Cardiff People First

24th February - Caerphilly People First



On 24th February I co-chaired an online meeting of the Community of Good Practice Behaviour of Concern. We talked about positive behaviour support and about having choice and control. It was a pleasure to welcome Joe Powell to the expert panel.

Gerraint Jones Griffiths

Are your contact details up to date?

Name

Address

Phone Number

We're checking that we have the right contact details for our members.

We're contacting you by telephone to ask questions about how you prefer to communicate.

You might have had a call from one of the team already?



We want to make sure that we do good work for a wide range of people, so we are asking about gender, sexuality, faith and ethnicity. You don't have to answer those questions if you don't want to.



If you haven't yet heard from us, it could mean that we don't have your telephone number.

Please can you get in touch with us to confirm your contact details, and to let us know if you would like to continue your membership with us? Get in touch by:

Email claire@allwalespeople1st.co.uk

Telephone Claire on 07399059631

WhatsApp Claire on 07399059631

Facebook messenger All Wales People First



Through our Eyes on tour



We were invited to a St David's Day event hosted by Cwm Taff People First at the Arts Factory on 2nd March. There were lots of activities and member performances. The event was very well attended.



More people got to see the exhibition and what people with learning disabilities can do with the right choices and support.

We made quite a few social media video clips on the day - Take a look at our You Tube and Tik Tok.



If you haven't yet seen the Through our Eyes Exhibition, there's still time to see it at the Arts Factory in Maerdy

The address is : Maerdy Community Centre, CF43 4DD



Their Brew Factory Cafe is open 9.30am - 2.30pm Tuesday - Friday. You can buy hot and cold drinks, cooked breakfasts and snacks.



We worked on the diversity of the exhibition during 2025 and we can't wait to launch our new images at #LDAdFest2026

News from Groups



Your Voice Advocacy

Hello, my name is Neil Williams and I work for Your Voice Advocacy.



I am working on a project with **West Glamorgan Partnership Board**.

It's about helping more people with learning disabilities to volunteer.

I've been visiting groups and meeting one to one with people who are interested in **volunteering**. I've done 7 interviews so far.



The area I cover is Neath and Port Talbot.

Anyone with a learning disability who lives in the Neath Port Talbot area and is interested in volunteering can call 01639 631246 or email me **neilwilliamsyva@outlook.com**



I also chair an easy read group with West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board.

I enjoy volunteering work and having paid work.

Neil Williams

News from groups



Tea at Three, Gwynedd

We have been very busy:

Talking about elections

We talked a lot about the upcoming elections.

Jeni Andrews visited us.

She talked about the North Wales strategy.

Hustings event

We had a hustings event in Llan Ffestiniog.

Andrea and Gerraint went to the event.

They asked questions to the election candidates.

Andrea asked about housing.

This is important to Harry.

Harry was on holiday, so he could not come.

All the parties gave positive answers about housing.

Learning how to vote

Andrea and Geraint went to a workshop.

They learned how to vote in the upcoming elections.



News from Groups



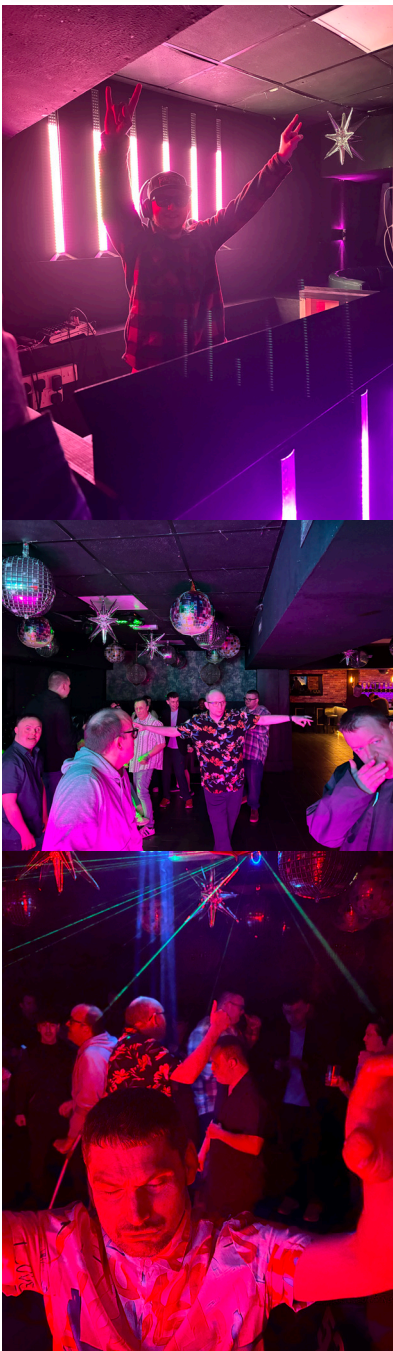
Vale People Matter was created less than a year ago. In a short space of time we have developed a wide range of inclusive and engaging services for our community.

We focus on creating **opportunities for people to connect** with others, build confidence, and try new things in a safe and positive environment. We want to make sure every individual has the chance to experience new, enjoyable, and meaningful activities that support wellbeing, independence, and social inclusion.

In March, we had our first **accessible club night** at Cubanas Night Club in Barry. The event was designed to be welcoming, inclusive, and enjoyable for everyone. The venue was accessible and there was a great atmosphere where people felt comfortable and supported.

Overall, it was a fabulous and memorable experience, and everyone who attended had a brilliant time.

We're looking forward to creating more events like this in the future.



News from groups



Newport People First

Zarah and Alex delivered **learning disability awareness training** to Carly and the Aneurin Bevan Mental Health Team.

It was great working with them to develop their communication and listening skills in the work place.

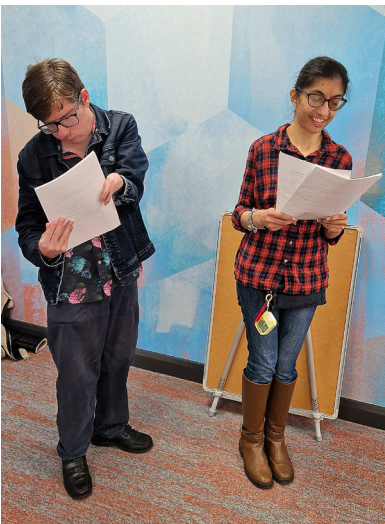
They were a brilliant group to work with. We delivered the same training to Learning Disability Wales in April. That session went very well too.



At our April **All Members Meeting** we had a guest called Rocio Bucheli, a very talented artist and a neighbour in the same building as our offices.

It was a great learning experience - we started by drawing simple shapes then gradually adding details. Rocio said "Art is fun, no rules and is for everyone!"

I enjoyed remembering how art helps us to forget any stress or mental health worries we might be going through.



Zarah Kaleem

News from groups



Caerphilly People First

We recently visited The Lewis School to take part in the **First Give programme**. Ffion and Amy explained how a grant could make a real difference to our organisation. A special shoutout to Year 7S, who raised £75 for us through a scavenger hunt.

We attended the **Annual Health Check Hackathon** organised by Cwm Taff People First. A hackathon is all about being creative. Groups worked together to create poems, songs, videos and drama. Our group wrote a poem about Annual Health Checks.

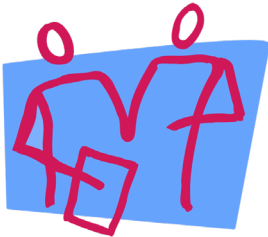


Thank you to Gerraint and Simon from **Learning Disability Wales** for delivering a fantastic workshop about democracy and voting. With the Senedd elections on May 7th, it was the perfect time to learn more. We explored the different ways to vote, including in person at a polling station, by post, or by proxy, where someone you trust votes on your behalf. We also learned how to register to vote online, and why voting is important, including how it gives you a voice, helps shape your future, and shows that everyone's vote matters.



News from groups

People First Bridgend
Pobl Yn Gyntaf Pen-Y-Bont



putting people first
rhoi pobl yn gyntaf

People First Bridgend

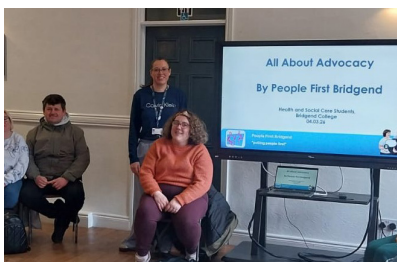
Our Advisory Team started the year by going to **Bridgend College** to teach health and social care students all about advocacy and self-advocacy.

Toni worked on developing a presentation about **My Dream Home**, a booklet designed by Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership to help people with learning disabilities make choices about independent living.

We took part in a **Scrutiny meeting** with Bridgend County Borough Council. It was a chance for adults with learning disabilities to talk to councillors and heads of service about our lives and experiences, what is important to us, and what could be improved.

We visited **Swansea University** to teach students about Good and Bad Communication in Social Work Practice. We had fantastic feedback from the social workers of the future.

So far this year **we've hosted** Bridgend Council, the Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust, South Wales Police, and All Wales People First! We're excited to continue working with other services and organisations!



News from groups



Roaring Mon

Working Together

We recently met with Jeni Andrews, Michelle, and James to talk about the North Wales Participation Strategy. It was a great opportunity for the group to share ideas and make sure people with lived experience are involved in decisions that affect them.

Making a Difference – Bus Shelters Project

The group has been working on a presentation about bus shelters in Anglesey. We shared our views and ideas on how they can be improved.

Jac attended his first residential with All Wales People First. He enjoyed the experience and had the chance to meet new people, build confidence, and learn new skills.

A **Learning Disability Forum** was held at the Glanhwfa Centre Llangefni, and it was a great success!

We had important discussions about:

- Transport
- Sport
- Employment

It was fantastic to see so many people involved and sharing their views.



News from groups

Torfaen People First



Torfaen People First

Keep cash, keep choice protest

Members of Torfaen People First wanted to hold a campaign at the Senedd about the difficulties a cashless society poses for our members and others in society.

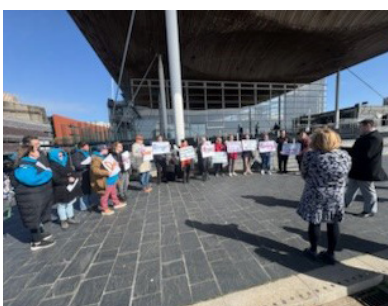


In March we joined Cwm Taff People First and Caerphilly People First, All Wales People First and Mencap outside the Senedd for an important protest.

The message was clear: **No cash = no rights.** For many people with learning disabilities, cash means independence, choice, and control.



Not everyone can use cards or machines, so removing cash risks leaving many people behind. We made our voices heard. We shouted "Keep cash, keep choice, listen to every voice!".



We also sang a song that we had written to raise awareness about this topic.

facebook®



All Wales People First, Chief Executive - 3 March

Attended the last Learning Disability Ministerial Advisory Group meeting of this Parliamentary term today at the Welsh Government buildings in Cathays Park in Cardiff.

Amongst topics discovered were plans/ ideas for the next Welsh Government transformation plan. Big thanks to all who have represented All Wales People First at these meetings over the current Governments term in office. They are Sophie Hinksman, Kurtis Marshall, Victoria Waller, Ruth Yarwood, Michelle Williams and Lynne Evans. Thanks for representing our members views so well.

What happens next depends on whoever forms the next Welsh Government. We will keep you updated as ever.



**Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government**

Round up



All Wales People First, Chief Executive - 3 December

Was wonderful to be part of this. I'm the one on the left. Today, 3rd December is International Day of Persons with Disabilities and we're at the Haydn Ellis building at Cardiff University. We're promoting #ThroughOurEyes0 on Tour and All Wales People First on the stall. All Wales People First, Chief Executive - Joe Powell is joining Professor Debbie Foster & Rosie Moriarty Simmonds OBE on the expert panel in the lecture hall later on. #LDVoiceWales #internationaldayofpersonswith-disabilities

